



Weekly Special Report



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INSIDE

AFRICAN ISSUES

Training Boosts Maritime Safety in Africa (P 3)

"Family Talk" Empowers Sierra Leone to Move Past Civil Conflict (P 5)

Zimbabwean Activist Plans Human Rights Education Program (P 5)

AMERICAN NEWS

United States to Host Climate Change Forum in April (P 7)

Women Environmental Filmmakers Tell Important Stories (P 8)

U.S. Community Colleges Are Ready to Train Green Work Force (P 10)

Citizens Police Academies Offer Realistic View of Police Work (P 12)

PEACE AND SECURITY

Obama Heads to Europe with Extensive Schedule (P 13)

New Afghan-Pakistan Plan a Comprehensive Strategy, Obama Says (P 14)

ECONOMICS AND TRADE

United States Seeks Collaborative Solution to Financial Crisis (P 15)

Group Forecasts Sharp Decline in World Economy (P 16)

Major Economic Powers to Focus on Global Recovery (P 17)

GLOBAL HEALTH

U.S., Japanese Scientists Test Treatment for Muscular Dystrophy (P 18)

President Obama Makes Debut on World Stage

By David McKeeby
Staff Writer

Washington — President Obama's arrival at the G20 financial summit in London gives his administration an opportunity to showcase its collaborative approach to foreign and economic policies.



Downing Street wave: US President Barack Obama (2R) and First Lady Michelle Obama (R) are greeted by British Prime Minister Gordon Brown (2L) and his wife Sarah on arrival at 10 Downing street in London (AFP/Carl de Souza)

"I came here to put forward our ideas, but I also came here to listen, and not to lecture," Obama said in an April 1 joint press appearance with British Prime Minister Gordon Brown. "To confront a crisis that knows no borders, we have a

(Continued on page 2)

Business Form Discussed AGOA and WTO Activities in Ethiopia

As his last public speaking event before departing Ethiopia, USAID Mission Director Glenn Anders addressed the private sector at the USAID Business Forum on March 31 at the Sheraton Addis. He discussed the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) and World Trade Organization (WTO) activi-



USAID Mission Director Glenn Anders (C) speaks at the Forum

ties, telling the Forum participants that "there is still room to take advantage of the benefits under AGOA, which will help you earn foreign currency, create jobs, and boost profits." He

(Continued on page 2)

Obama Makes Debut on World Stage . . .

(Continued from page 1)

responsibility to coordinate our actions and to focus on common ground, not on our occasional differences. If we do, I believe we can make enormous progress."

The two leaders met ahead of a gathering of leaders from the 20 advanced and emerging market countries that account for 85 percent of the global economy. Together, these leaders will work to formulate a common set of measures, including strengthening financial regulations, fostering economic growth, supporting emerging markets, rejecting protectionism and continuing foreign humanitarian aid programs serving the world's poorest and most vulnerable communities, to confront the worst global economic crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s.

"History shows us that when nations fail to cooperate, when they turn away from one another, when they turn inward, the price for our people only grows," Obama said. "We will move forward with a sense of common purpose. We have to do what's necessary to restore growth and to pursue the reforms that can stabilize our financial system well into the future. We have to reject protectionism and accelerate our efforts to support emerging markets. And we have to put in place a structure that can sustain our cooperation in the months and years ahead."

Obama acknowledged international criticism of the U.S. financial regulatory system's role in fomenting the crisis, but said many other nations share comparable challenges overseeing increasingly complex and highly integrated global capital

markets.

Obama said when the world is fearful, "there is a strong tendency to look for somebody to blame."

"At this point, I'm less interested in identifying blame than [in] fixing the problem," the president said.

Domestically, the United States is moving forward aggressively on economic recovery and reform, Obama said, enacting a \$787 billion economic stimulus package and a parallel bank rescue to get credit flowing again, and new regulatory legislation to restore confidence in American financial institutions. "We've passed through an era of profound irresponsibility," Obama said.

While media reports have highlighted significant differences among G20 leaders on the nature of economic stimulus and financial regulations, Obama said that his administration's international consultations suggest that the separation among the various parties has been vastly overstated: "I think there has been an extraordinary convergence, and I'm absolutely confident that the United States, as a peer of these other countries, will help to lead us through this very difficult time."

Obama also met with Russian President Dmitry Medvedev to announce a renewed effort to make deep cuts in U.S. and Russian nuclear weapons stockpiles as part of a wider "reset" in relations between Washington and Moscow.

In addition, the American president held talks with Chinese President Hu Jintao on an initiative to deepen economic and security cooperation.

President Obama and first lady Michelle Obama rounded out their first day in London with a private audience with Queen Elizabeth II at Buckingham Palace, followed by a G20 leaders' reception.

"Every single nation who's here has a stake in the other," Obama said. "We won't solve all our problems in the next few days, but we can make real and unprecedented progress. We have an obligation to keep working at it until the burden on ordinary people is lifted, until we've achieved the kind of steady growth that creates jobs and advances prosperity for people everywhere." ♦

Business Form Discussed AGOA and WTO . . .

(Continued from page 1)

also urged the private sector not to think of WTO accession as an end in itself, but "as a means to jump start economic development".

USAID has supported the VEGA Ethiopia AGOA Plus project since 2005, helping link Ethiopian producers to American buyers. Last year, Ethiopian exports to the U.S. under AGOA doubled to U.S.\$18 million. The American Chamber of Commerce in Ethiopia was also launched this year, and will further scale up trade between the U.S. and Ethiopia. Meanwhile, Ethiopia is moving towards accession to the WTO, which will create a more predictable, secure business environment for investors. ♦

Training Boosts Maritime Safety in Africa

By Jacquelyn S. Porth
Staff Writer

Washington — The USS Nashville is traveling around the west coast of Africa, serving as a floating classroom, as part of an international effort to promote maritime safety and security in the region.

But if you think that what the ship is doing for the Africa Partnership Station initiative — as the collaborative effort is known — is only about naval exercises, you are wrong. There is a strong civilian-training component with participation by organizations such as the U.S. Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Wildlife Conservation Society, a nonprofit whose mission might seem more tied to land.

How does the society fit into a maritime environment? In Gabon, for example, society members worked recently with that country's navy and Department of Fisheries on ways to better protect marine life in the Mayumba National Park along the Gabon-Congo border.

Park staff learned about a radar installation that will help with future enforcement efforts in and around protected areas. Richard Parnell, who worked on the society's project in Mayumba, said it will help park authorities plan future missions.

The Africa Partnership Station began in 2006 by sending U.S. ships on rotating port visits throughout the region, carrying on-board part-



A U.S. Navy nurse corps officer (left) with Africa Partnership Station (APS) Nashville, assists on a dental exam with a Nigerian navy dental officer at a dental clinic in Lagos, March 18, 2009, (U.S. Navy photo)

ners from Europe, South America and Africa. In the summer of 2009, the Dutch navy will send one of its amphibious ships to promote meteorological and oceanographic projects in the Gulf of Guinea.

Central and Western African nations have requested assistance for all the training projects undertaken as part of the partnership, including how to cope with oil spills.

The Nashville, which made its latest port call in Lagos, Nigeria, has representatives onboard from 10 countries in and around the Gulf of Guinea, seven from Europe and one from South America. The crew manifest includes specialists in fishery management and environmental conservation.

The Americans and Nigerians are working on a hydrography project

— measurement of navigable waters — as well as port security improvements. Italians are taking the lead in fishery enforcement workshops in Nigeria.

Many of the nations in the region are especially interested in halting the loss of revenue being siphoned off by illegal fisherman. But there are other problems, too, including the transit of narcotics and human trafficking.

The United States sees the initiative as a way to build enduring relationships in the region and provide fast disaster and humanitarian assistance when needed. The activities are designed so the participants learn from each other and build trust along the way. Similar endeavors are under way in other parts of the world. (See "Navy Ships Offer

(Continued on page 4)

Training Boosts Maritime Safety in Africa . . .

(Continued from page 3)

Training, Deliver Supplies to the Americas

Besides Nigeria and Gabon, the Nashville has sailed to Cameroon and Senegal. Although the ship did not make a full-fledged visit to Liberia, it dropped off some U.S. Marines to work briefly with the military in Monrovia.

INTERNATIONAL "CROSS TRAINING"

Rear Admiral William Loeffler said there are a number of advantages for personnel supporting the endeavor. The Africans specify the training they want and need, he said, while visitors gain a new understanding of cultures and local challenges through joint hands-on activities. "The computer age is a wonderful thing," he said, referring to the wealth of information about Africa available on the Internet, "but it is just not the same as actually seeing conditions yourself."

The initiative aims to help countries in the region better understand what is happening in their territorial and adjacent waters using a shared, unclassified automated information system.

Maritime infrastructure improvements such as dredging in shallow waters, setting up buoys and building roads to move goods rapidly from ports to inland destinations are part of this initiative.

Training focuses on securing port warehouses and preparing African naval and coast guard personnel for search-and-rescue operations in bad weather or to deal with fish poachers.



A Nigerian navy dental officer and a U.S. nurse corps officer with Africa Partnership Station (APS) Nashville review an X-ray at a dental clinic in Lagos, March 18, 2009. (U.S. Navy photo)

Loeffler told reporters at the Washington-based Foreign Press Center on March 26 that the initiative gives indigenous naval forces the ability to govern their own space effectively. In any number of African countries, he said, resources have flowed readily to land forces, but navies and coast guards have not fared as well.

The Africa Partnership Station is not confined to a single ship visit: There are follow-up visits, but no repetitive training. Loeffler, who is director of policy and strategy for U.S. Naval Forces in Europe, said planners see each visit as an opportunity to build on the last one and to teach new skills.

Loeffler said feedback from African leaders has been uniformly positive, not only as a result of the high-profile military training efforts but also as a result of community outreach programs that put sailors and

engineers into villages to repair schools and orphanages. The military personnel spend shore time painting, fixing roofs or distributing donated medical supplies.

And, as word of the initiative spreads, Loeffler said requests are coming in from other African countries wanting to be part of this productive, multinational, maritime partnership.

For more information, see American Giving (<http://fpolicy.america.gov/fpolicy/aid/index.html>).

(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>) ♦

“Family Talk” Empowers Sierra Leone to Move Past Civil Conflict

By Stephen Kaufman
Staff Writer

Washington — Reconciliation efforts following Sierra Leone’s 1991–2002 civil war included a truth-and-reconciliation committee and a special court to try those accused of the most egregious human rights abuses, but the short mandate of these processes kept their effects from filtering down to many in the populace. As a result, renewed aggression prompted by fear or a desire for revenge continues to threaten the peace.

To encourage wider dialogue and help create more possibilities for individual and community healing, the Maine-based Catalyst for Peace foundation teamed with the Sierra Leone nongovernmental organization Forum of Conscience for the Fambul Tok program.

In the Krio language, “Fambul Tok” means “family talk.” The program enlarges Sierra Leone’s traditions for discussing and resolving issues within the family to encompass a much larger community and provide it with a structure for beginning a process of reconciliation.

Amy Potter, associate director for The Practice and Training Institute at the Center for Justice and Peacebuilding at Eastern Mennonite University in Virginia, spoke with America.gov about the program. She worked with Fambul Tok as a program officer and trainer from the program’s beginning in December 2007 until January and continues to serve as a consultant.

TRADITIONAL RITUALS REPAIR THE COMMUNITY

Part of the program “is about reviv-



Community welcoming Fambul Tok team and guests in Sierra Leone

ing tradition,” she said, such as bonfire and dance ceremonies of reconciliation that involve confessions and forgiveness, and ritual cleansing ceremonies to bring offenders back into the community and create opportunities for people to tell their stories, take responsibility and repair relationships.

These practices are rare in modern Sierra Leone, but Potter says the traditional rituals are relevant and helpful because they build a “strong community fabric.”

“That’s one of the big things that helps people work through their trauma, when they feel that they are part of the connected network of a community.”

The staff members from Catalyst for Peace and Forum of Conscience create the structure for communities to reconcile. Staff members first meet with a diverse group of

leaders within a district, including chiefs, religious figures, women and youth, to discuss their needs and the community’s willingness to participate.

Fambul Tok departs from tradition because it makes a point of involving women and youth, populations historically excluded from such ceremonies. It also is a voluntary process. In the past, a community decision to reconcile made participation mandatory — effectively telling its members “Get over yourself and do it!” Potter said.

“This is not a political process,” she said, and it does not force people to reconcile or meet with those who have harmed them or their loved ones. The goal is to “talk to people to see what the harm has been, what their needs are, and to see if there is anything that they can do to facilitate forward movement.”

(Continued on page 9)

Zimbabwean Activist Plans Human Rights Education Program

By Stephen Kaufman
Staff Writer

Washington — Human rights soon will become part of secondary school curricula in southern Africa if Tichawona Shumba has his way.

The London-based founder of the nonprofit group Inside Africa Foundation said human rights education will promote peace on the continent and help develop a new generation of independent-minded leaders.

"This is a modern world where people should really think about human suffering and also stop it and learn to live together so that people do change," he told America.gov. "If I train teachers and they go out and teach in schools, it means changing a lot of people within a short space of time."

Additionally, Shumba believes human rights education for the young will help create desperately needed new leadership for southern African nations, where very few young people consider getting involved in politics. He said the election of 47-year-old Barack Obama as president of the United States has provided inspiration for many.

"The problem that we have in Africa is we are so afraid. We cannot challenge our elders," he said. Constructive criticism can be misconstrued as just another Western-sponsored activity. "So basically what I am aiming to do with this

program is I want to try and open up peoples' minds so that in the future, when we start looking for leaders, we don't become desperate," and risk trading dictators for leaders without a plan for reform.

Foremost in Shumba's mind is what human rights education could accomplish in his home country, Zimbabwe.



Zimbabwe's once impressive education system has declined dramatically due to political unrest and lack of funding.

The education system in Zimbabwe has faced declining standards and disruptions due to the country's economic and political problems. Many teachers have fled their country to neighboring South Africa and Botswana due to poor working conditions and economic hardships. Shumba said declining standards in government-run schools have prompted Zimbabweans to place their children in private schools and colleges despite the serious economic challenges.

FIRST STEPS

Shumba said his plan is for Inside Africa Foundation to release a hu-

man rights education journal and organize international and regional conferences and workshops on human rights, as well as stage and music performances. The foundation would also recognize top human rights educators with awards.

Shumba has identified qualified teachers and envisions six- to eight-month training sessions on human rights concepts, including conflict

resolution and promoting peaceful co-existence among different tribal, political and religious groups. After training, the teachers would join school faculties in southern Africa to teach human rights "as an extra subject, just like business studies and computers," he explained.

He believes the secondary school human rights curricula most likely would be introduced in Christian schools, private

schools and colleges. Inside Africa Foundation's goal is to help governments in the region understand the benefits of such courses instead of looking at them as Western-sponsored activities.

Under his plan, South Africa would serve as a regional base for the program's activities there and in Zimbabwe, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Malawi, he said.

"Starting a project like this is not easy ... and it may fail to take off" without support, Shumba said. He is seeking help from overseas and hopes to attract celebrity support

(Continued on page 11)

United States to Host Climate Change Forum in April

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr.
Staff Writer

Washington — The United States has invited 16 major economies to a forum in April to discuss climate change and clean energy ventures, the White House said.

The April 27–28 meeting in Washington is designed to culminate in a leaders' meeting on the sidelines of the G8 Summit in July in La Maddalena, Italy. Ultimately, it aims to help negotiators reach an accord later in the year.

"The Major Economies Forum will facilitate a candid dialogue among key developed and developing countries, help generate the political leadership necessary to achieve a successful outcome at the U.N. climate change negotiations that will convene this December in Copenhagen, and advance the exploration of concrete initiatives and joint ventures that increase the supply of clean energy while cutting greenhouse gas emissions," White House press secretary Robert Gibbs said in a statement issued March 27.

President Obama said he wants the United States to assume a leadership role in global warming talks, and this forum is part of that process. He has said he wants the United States to reduce emissions by approximately 15 percent to 1990 levels by 2020.

The major economies invited are: Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, the European Union, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Mexico, Russia, South Africa and the United Kingdom. Denmark has been asked to participate because it holds the presidency of the

U.S. Special Envoy for Climate Change Todd Stern said March 29 at the Bonn conference, "We want to make up for lost time, and we are seized with the urgency of the task before us." Stern was the senior White House negotiator at the 1997 Kyoto Protocol talks.

Stern said in an interview with the Associated Press March 28 from Bonn that he was making "the first statement on behalf of the United States and [saying] we're back, we're serious, we're here, we're committed and we're going to try to get this thing done."

The two-week Bonn conference with 175 countries participating is the latest set of talks to seek a climate change agreement to replace the 1997 Kyoto Protocol on emissions targets for advanced economies, which expires in 2012.

What foreign affairs decisions should President Obama consider? Comment on America.gov's blog. (<http://blogs.america.gov/campaign/2009/01/21/day-2-what-should-obama%e2%80%99s-top-priorities-be/>)

(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>) ♦



December Conference of the Parties to the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change. The convention meets December 7–18 in Copenhagen.

The agenda of the April meeting, to be hosted by the U.S. State Department, will include technology, financing and emissions trading, the White House said.

A new round of U.N. climate change talks to close gaps in a draft international accord began March 29 in Bonn, Germany.

Women Environmental Filmmakers Tell Important Stories

By Carolee Walker
Staff Writer

Washington — The best environmental filmmakers help good science reach the public, says Laura Boyd, a film and television producer at the National Geographic Society. "Scientists have enough to do without marketing their findings."

The challenge environmental filmmakers face is to tell a story that a young person can understand, but with sophistication that appeals to an adult audience, Boyd said.

Boyd, 39, who is one of the producers on the popular science show *Wild Chronicles* for National Geographic Television, joined a panel discussion at the D.C. Environmental Film Festival's screening of student films at American University on March 16. Although Boyd has a degree in photography, she said she knew at an early age that she wanted to base her career in the natural world.

After moving in her early 20s to Seattle, she worked cleaning rooms and serving meals on a small cruise line running trips to Alaska. Ultimately, Boyd worked her way up to expedition leader on a large ecotourism ship providing natural history commentary and leading expeditions on a ship named *World Discover* in Alaska and the South Pacific.

After working as a sales representative for a film company, Boyd decided it was time to make movies instead of selling them. She enrolled in the science and natural history filmmaking program at Montana State University with 20 other graduate students, most of them scientists, and spent three years

learning how to tell stories through film.

"Filmmaking is intuitive storytelling," Boyd said. "Each person develops his or her own style, and some of the biologists in my class became excellent filmmakers." Boyd said in some ways the program was easier for her than the scientists because she was more familiar with the cameras and knew how to think about a topic visually. "But I needed to learn how to develop relationships and interact with scientists."

Young women — and young men — interested in filmmaking need to learn how to tell a good and important story with words and visually, Boyd advised. Writing is a huge part of production, and it helps to learn a language other than English, she added.

Boyd's short film *Caballo Loco* on Easter Island is about a veterinarian who discovers a mysterious disease that is killing horses and cattle on Easter Island in the Polynesian triangle in the Pacific Ocean. She said it is the most important story she has told so far.

"When you make a film about a cause, you don't just hand in the film when it's finished," Boyd said. "Now you're a representative of the cause and both the cause and the film have become personal."

Filmmaking can be physically challenging work, for both men and women. "I do not know any cine-



Environmental Filmmaker
Laura Boyd

matographers who do not have back problems," Boyd said. "I love to be behind the camera, and working in documentary you find that you have to be able to do everything."

Suzanne Taylor, 26, a graduate student at American University's Center for Environmental Filmmaking, is part of a crew of students that made *EcoViews: The Chesapeake Bay* (2009), which was screened at the D.C. Environmental Film Festival.



Environmental Filmmaker Suzanne Taylor

EcoViews is a short film focusing on efforts to save the Chesapeake Bay in light of the local fishing industry's struggles to cope with in-

(Continued on page 9)

“Family Talk” Empowers Sierra Leone to Move Past Civil Conflict . . .

(Continued from page 5)

But the community ultimately has to do most of the work, including the long preparations and discussions required before two sides can meet and reconcile through traditional rituals.

DIVIDED COMMUNITIES CANNOT THRIVE

Potter said every community that has been approached thus far has agreed to participate. Most understand “if their communities are divided, they’re not going to thrive and they’re not going to be able to really move forward,” she said. “That’s particularly true there because a lot of victims and offenders are from the same communities.”

During the civil war, the country was not necessarily divided along ethnic or religious lines, and neighbors were sometimes at odds. “Even family members hurt each



Amy Potter says western countries would benefit from learning the need to address harm in post-conflict situations.

come back.

Fambul Tok has facilitated at least 40 village-level reconciliation ceremonies in which thousands have participated. The first ceremony was held in March 2008 in Kailahun District, where the civil war started in 1991.

“The intention is in three years to have ceremonies in all of the [12] districts, two per section,” Potter said.

other. There were a lot of child soldiers who were forced to do awful things to their family members,” Potter said. Many young people have been too scared to return home, and the communities are looking for a way to encourage them to

The program recognizes the ceremonies are only the beginning of the process, and has followed up by developing community farms, dedicating trees to serve as traditional meeting places and promoting friendly football matches between aggrieved communities.

Potter says Sierra Leone’s reconciliation traditions can be useful to Westerners, who often view the response to violence as a matter of “blame and punishment,” and do not attach the same cultural importance to community or the need to address harm.

“Addressing the harm makes a difference,” she said. “That’s what makes people OK and pulls communities back together and makes people not live in fear ... on both sides.”

More information on Fambul Tok, including a six-minute film, is available on the Catalyst for Peace Web site (<http://www.catalystforpeace.org/>) ♦

Women Environmental Filmmakers Tell Important Stories . . .

(Continued from page 8)

creasingly lower productions of the bay’s famous blue crabs and oysters. Taylor, who studied broadcast news and international politics at the University of Georgia, worked on the farming segment of the film, which was made collaboratively by graduate students at American University.

Documentary filmmaking is a means of visually exploring environmental issues, said Taylor, whose cross-disciplinary class combining film students with biology and political

science students will travel to the Galapagos Islands in May 2009 to continue to integrate storytelling with science and policy. “I am very interested in message and story, and how to communicate ideas most effectively through film.”

Taylor is now working with her colleagues to form a “Women in Film” student organization at American University. She said the women she has met in the film industry have “continued to broaden my ideas of what a woman filmmaker looks like and added depth to my experience.”

Boyd’s film *Caballo Loco* on Easter Island (<http://www.lifeonterra.com/episode.php?id=38>) is available on the Montana State University Web site. Additional information on the D.C. Environmental Film Festival (<http://dcenvironmentalfilmfest.org/>) is available on the festival Web site.

(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>) ♦

U.S. Community Colleges Are Ready to Train Green Work Force

By Jeffrey Thomas
Staff Writer

Washington — Lane Community College in Eugene, Oregon, is home to the Northwest Energy Education Institute, which offers courses and degrees in renewable energy technology, water conservation and energy management.

While training students for future work in alternative-energy industries, Lane Community College also operates its campus in a way that strives to do no harm to the environment and to preserve scarce resources. Lane has begun to help other community colleges develop similar programs and practices, making it a leader in promoting environmental stewardship.

While “green jobs” has become a rallying cry for activists and politicians, it is a governing principle at Lane.

It looks like a smart business strategy too. The U.S. government’s recently enacted economic stimulus bill includes more than \$100 billion for renewable energy, home weatherization, energy efficiency and power-grid upgrades. Projects financed through the bill’s grants and loan guarantees are expected to create hundreds of thousands of jobs.

Analysts believe there will not be enough people with the right skills to accomplish the goals of this new investment. A U.N. report says that a shortage of trained “green collar” workers across the world may be the biggest obstacle to renewable-energy and energy-efficiency



A student at Sinclair Community College in Dayton, Ohio, tests biodiesel fuel made from used cooking oil from the college's kitchens.

growth. A February survey conducted by the U.S. Association of Energy Engineers indicates there will be a shortage of qualified professionals in the energy-efficiency and renewable-energy fields in the next five years. Respondents called for national and state training programs to address the potential shortfall.

A recent report by the Academy for Education Development (AED) makes the case for community colleges to train the work force for a greening economy. “We have an economy in crisis. Thousands of workers are being laid off who need to upgrade their skills or be re-trained,” said AED’s Mindy Feldbaum, who authored the report with the National Council for Workforce Education.

Feldbaum said community colleges are prepared to provide the type of training required by the government’s new green investment. These public educational institutions offer one-year certificate programs, two-year associate degrees and shorter-term certificate and noncertificate programs.

“They’re kind of a unique institution in the sense that they have very strong labor-market connections and they’re very flexible in the sense that they can respond to emerging industries and employers’ changing skill needs,” Feldbaum said. Community colleges also are accessible and affordable for workers who have different levels of education.

Feldbaum said community colleges have been providing their students with skills for energy-efficiency and renewable-energy projects for some time already.

WHERE ARE GREEN JOBS?

The phrase “green jobs” brings to mind wind power installers and maintenance workers, solar engineers and designers, architects, ethanol plant technicians, biodiesel lab technicians, and air-quality auditors. But green workers could also include those who propose or implement conservation ideas to save energy or water, reduce pollution or restore biodiversity and ecosystems.

As part of the global transition to a more sustainable economy, some jobs will be created and some lost, but many will simply be trans-

(Continued on page 11)

U.S. Community Colleges Are Ready to Train Green Work Force . . .

(Continued from page 10)

formed. "Green is going to be incorporated in every industry," Feldbaum said.

She agrees with those who say it is difficult to define what a green industry is. For example, making wind turbines is a job not much different from other kinds of manufacturing. "But I do think green skills will be integrated into everything we do, and sustainability principles will eventually be in every occupation," she said.

Feldbaum said community colleges like Lane that have been involved in

sustainability efforts and green work force training for a long time are great places for international students to consider. "It would also be good to have sharing of practices," she said. U.S. community colleges would be open to partnering with and helping institutions of higher education in other countries to come up with their own green training programs.

The report on the role of community colleges in training a green work force (<http://www.aed.org/Publications/upload/GoingGreen.pdf>) (PDF, 3 MB) is available on the AED Web site.

The U.N. report "Green Jobs: Towards decent work in a sustainable, low-carbon world (http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_098503.pdf)" (PDF, 4.5 MB) is available on the Web site of the United Nations' International Labour Organization.

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Zimbabwean Activist Plans Human Rights Education Program . . .

(Continued from page 6)

similar to that of actor George Clooney, who raised awareness of the humanitarian crisis in the Darfur region of Sudan.

"If it's done properly, if I can get people to help me out, this can start as early as 2010" for students at various schools in southern Africa, he said, anticipating that at least 3,000 could participate in Inside Africa Foundation's program at both the certificate and diploma levels every year, and the concept can be transferred to other parts of Africa and the developing world.

The goal is for students to receive human rights training at an earlier age "so that when they go to university they will have an idea of what human rights is all about. It

will entice them to even go for human rights degrees," he said.

THE FUTURE OF ZIMBABWE

Shumba is optimistic that in Zimbabwe after controversial President Robert Mugabe leaves power, classes on human rights and peaceful co-existence will be a welcome addition to secondary schools.

"My honest opinion is that anger right now is manufactured at the highest level. People in Zimbabwe are prepared to live together," he says, citing his own background in a mixed tribal area in the southern part of the country.

He said many of his fellow citizens have been forced into the political violence between Mugabe's supporters and those of the opposition

Movement for Democratic Change. Zimbabwe's youth have found themselves fighting each other.

Despite the current bleak conditions, "I'm quite confident that Zimbabwe will actually be a leading example of people who love to live together." Shumba said.

For more information about Inside Africa Foundation, contact the group at insideafricafoundation@gmx.com (<mailto:insideafricafoundation@gmx.com>).

(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>) ♦

Citizens Police Academies Offer Realistic View of Police Work

By Jane Morse
Staff Writer

Washington — The proliferation of police shows on television demonstrates the curiosity average citizens have about police work. But the best way for civilians to learn about the challenges and limits of policing is to sign up for a citizens police academy.

A citizens police academy is not a miniature police academy, Lieutenant Richard Powers told America.gov. "It is strictly aimed at civilians," he said. "This is all about education and about exchange of ideas with civilians."

Powers, who has 20 years' experience on the South Bend Police Department in Indiana, is the president of the National Citizens Police Academy Association (NCPAA), which has more than 340 members across the United States. NCPAA serves as a resource center for sharing ideas and providing materials to enable police departments to set up their own citizens police academies.

"Generally, the relationship between the police and the citizen is one of 'love/hate,'" the NCPAAA acknowledges on its Web site. "To the citizen, it may frequently appear that the police are not doing their job or are exceeding their boundaries. By allowing citizens a firsthand look at what rules, regulations and policies the police follow, some of the misunderstanding may be alleviated."

ACADEMIES REQUIRE REAL COMMITMENT

Powers estimates that about one-third of the thousands of local, county and state police depart-

ments across the United States conduct citizens police academies. These academies represent a real commitment of time and effort — by the police department and by citizen students.



A police officer shows citizens how to use window pins for safety.

Most academies are free; a few require a small fee. About 70 percent of the academies, Powers said, are funded from the police department's own budget or from those of local government entities.

The South Bend Police Department's Citizens Police Academy requires participants to pass criminal background checks and to attend a two-and-half-hour evening class once a week for 13 weeks.

Classes address how police departments prioritize emergency calls, arrest procedures, police ethics, how citizen complaints are investigated, police discipline, policies on the use of force, and the definition of a criminal act.

Equally important, the classes provide a forum for calm discussion of issues that bother citizens, Powers said.

"There is no topic that we're afraid to talk about," Powers said. "And people will test us on that." Many academy attendees, he said, are surprised at police willingness to discuss sensitive issues like racial profiling and the treatment of illegal immigrants.

Those who attend citizens police academies include, in addition to ordinary citizens, elected officials, members of the news media, judges, heads of city agencies and clergy, Powers said.

Often, he said, attendees are motivated by an incident in their own lives, such as a police officer pulling over their child for a traffic violation or the police department impounding their car.

"There are people who come to the citizens police academies who attend strictly to find out how bad we do as a police department, because



Firearms simulation training at the South Bend Citizens Police Academy

they've got a set agenda," Powers said. "It's very surprising to find out that about 80 percent of them will leave with a positive attitude about us after the 13 weeks."

"One of the biggest things we have to strive for as an academy is that

(Continued on page 20)

Obama Heads to Europe with Extensive Schedule

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr.
Staff Writer

Washington — President Obama heads to Europe to address issues that range from the global economy and financial regulation to security, especially in Afghanistan and Pakistan, nuclear nonproliferation and the Middle East.

Obama's first visit to Europe as president will cover eight days, with visits to five nations. He travels to London for the G20 summit of advanced and emerging market economies April 1–2, then he travels to the 60th anniversary NATO Summit hosted by Strasbourg, France, and Kehl, Germany, April 3–4 and the European Union summit April 5 in Prague, Czech Republic, before wrapping up his travel in Ankara and Istanbul, Turkey, April 6.

Along the way, the president will hold bilateral meetings with presidents, prime ministers and a king, make major speeches, and participate in student-outreach events.

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton travels to The Hague, Netherlands, on March 31 to join foreign ministers from more than 80 other countries to discuss the future of Afghanistan. Her trip follows an announcement made March 27 by Obama on the new U.S. strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan. The United States hopes to engage Iran on Afghanistan at the U.N.-sponsored meeting, a White House official said March 28.

"Our hope is that they see it as an opportunity to constructively engage this issue," said Deputy National Security Adviser Denis McDonough.



U.S. President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama walk to Air Force One at Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland before departing for Europe. (AFP/Saul Loeb)

Obama will present a four-part program at the G20 leaders' conference. The first step is putting in place a significant stimulus package to get growth going again, Froman said.

The president's plan also involves repairing financial systems to get lending flowing; avoiding protectionism; and minimizing the spread of the crisis to emerging markets and developing countries, Froman said.

Froman said the United States is seeking to expand regulation to systemically important institutions, products and markets, which includes hedge funds; to create codes of conduct for off-shore financial centers, also known as tax havens; to agree to reforms of the global financial system; and to push for greater cooperation among international regulators.

G20 FOCUSES ON GLOBAL RECESSION

White House press secretary Robert Gibbs said Obama has two main objectives for the G20 summit: concerted action to jump-start economic growth, and regulatory reform to prevent current economic woes from happening again. "The president and America are going to listen in London as well as to lead," he said March 28 in a White House conference call for journalists.

"The 20-plus countries that will be gathering represent more than 85 percent of the global economy," said Michael Froman, deputy national security adviser for international economic affairs, in the conference call with Gibbs.

PRESIDENT TRAVELS TO LONDON

Obama's first stop is London, where he will meet with British Prime Minister Gordon Brown and David Cameron, the leader of the Conservative Party, and attend a formal presentation to Queen Elizabeth II, McDonough said. Obama will hold separate meetings over the two days in London with Russian President Dmitry Medvedev and Chinese President Hu Jintao, and also with Saudi Arabia's King Abdullah, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and South Korean President Lee Myung-bak.

On April 2, Obama will participate in the G20 meetings, McDonough said.

(Continued on page 20)

New Afghan-Pakistan Plan a Comprehensive Strategy, Obama Says

By David McKeeby
Staff Writer

Washington — America's new strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan is focused on dismantling terrorist networks but will employ a wide array of tactics, from strengthening regional security forces to a renewed focus on diplomacy, development and international cooperation, says President Obama.

"We have to ensure that neither Afghanistan nor Pakistan can serve as a safe haven for al-Qaida," Obama said in a March 29 interview with the CBS television network's *Face the Nation*, calling the new plan "a comprehensive strategy that doesn't just rely on bullets or bombs, but also relies on agricultural specialists, on doctors, on engineers, to help create an environment in which people recognize that they have much more at stake in partnering with us, and the international community, than giving in to some of these extremist ideologies."

The new plan, announced March 27, was the product of several months of policy review and close consultations with Afghan and Pakistani officials and with U.S. allies taking part in the 41-nation, NATO-led International Security Assistance Force.

Obama had previously ordered 17,000 soldiers and Marines to reinforce the U.N.-mandated peacekeeping mission ahead of Afghan elections in August. The new plan calls for 4,000 additional troops, who will be dedicated to building on progress in training Afghan security forces to safeguard their own coun-

try.

"A central part of our strategy is to train the Afghan National Army so that they are taking the lead," Obama said. "That's been one of the few success stories that we've seen over the last several years. ...



President Barack Obama

The Afghan National Army actually has great credibility. They are effective fighters. We need to grow that."

The plan also stresses the importance of supporting Pakistan in its struggle against extremists, Obama said, a point underlined by the March 27 suicide bombing of a mosque in northwestern Pakistan that claimed more than 50 lives, followed by a terrorist attack on a police academy in Lahore on March 30.

"One of the concerns that we've had building up over the last several years is a notion, I think, among the average Pakistani that this is somehow America's war, and that they are not invested," Obama said. "That attitude, I think, has led to a steady creep of extremism in Pakistan that is the greatest threat to the stability of the Pakistan govern-

ment and, ultimately, the greatest threat to the Pakistani people."

Obama is seeking an expanded civilian presence in Afghanistan and has asked the U.S. Congress to approve legislation authorizing \$7.5 billion in direct support to Pakistan over the next five years. The funds would be used to build schools, roads and hospitals as well as to strengthen Pakistan's democracy. The legislation is being sponsored by Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman John Kerry and the committee's ranking Republican, Senator Richard Lugar.

"Our task in working with Pakistan is not just military, it's also our capacity to build their capacity, through civilian interventions, through development, through aid assistance," Obama said.

Obama is also calling on Congress to pass legislation to create opportunity zones in the Afghan-Pakistan border region that would allow manufacturers to develop local economies and bring stability to areas plagued by violence.

"What we want to do is say to the Pakistani people, 'You are our friends. You are our allies. We are going to give you the tools to defeat al-Qaida and to root out these safe havens. But we also expect some accountability, and we expect that you understand the severity and the nature of the threat.'"

(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>) ♦

United States Seeks Collaborative Solution to Financial Crisis

By David McKeeby
Staff Writer

Washington — The United States seeks a fresh start with its neighbors in the Americas, says Vice President Joe Biden, beginning with a collaborative approach to confronting the global financial crisis.

"We genuinely want to be collaborative. We genuinely want to engage in consultation. We genuinely want to know what others think," Biden told leaders gathered in Vina del Mar, Chile, for the March 28 Progressive Governance Conference. "We do not look to ourselves as the engine to solve the problems; we only look to ourselves in joining you to jointly solve the problems."

The event comes on the eve of the April 2–3 G20 London summit, where President Obama will join world leaders to discuss immediate global actions to boost the global economy as it faces the greatest challenges since the Great Depression of the 1930s.

"Only by working together can our countries overcome the challenges we face," Biden said in a March 27 commentary article that ran in several major Latin American newspapers. "Today, we are more than just independent nations who happen to be on the same side of the globe. In today's interconnected world, we are all neighbors who face many common concerns."

Biden briefed leaders on the administration's efforts to confront the domestic economic challenges it inherited on taking office. With as

much as 25 percent of global gross domestic product originating in the United States, Biden said U.S. success will go a long way toward improving conditions across the Americas, as well as addressing the overall global crisis.



Chilean President Michelle Bachelet and Vice President Biden on March 28.

Biden agreed with Latin American and European leaders meeting in Chile on the need for "new rules of the road" to reduce systemic risk, but warned critics against over-regulation, which could harm healthy markets and slow progress toward recovery.

"It's not a choice of markets or governments, in my view. A free market still needs to be able to function," Biden said. "It seems to me we need to save the markets from free marketers." In the United States, Biden said, progressive governance in a time of economic crisis means \$787 billion in a recently passed economic stimulus package. Biden has been

tasked with overseeing the effort, which he said could create or save 3.5 million jobs over the next 18 months through targeted government investments. Many of the investments would complement other administration goals by developing alternative energy sources, redeveloping U.S. infrastructure, and setting the stage for major reforms in U.S. health care.

Parallel to economic stimulus, the administration has launched a financial rescue operation to get credit flowing again, Biden said, restoring confidence in the banks by injecting capital into the system, helping clear bad assets from balance sheets, and introducing new government regulations to address the speculative investments that contributed to the crisis.

Additional action to address home mortgages, as well as a proposed \$3.7 trillion budget, round out the administration's plan, Biden said. The plan is ultimately aimed at building a path toward a more economically sustainable future.

"Forbearance is not an option," Biden said. "It's not just a question of having a social safety net to save people from falling; we want to lay a foundation for a new economy so that prosperity can be broadly shared."

Biden's trip also included a stop in Costa Rica, where he met with President Oscar Arias and several Central American leaders ahead of President Obama's appearance at the Summit of the Americas April 17–19 in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. ♦

Group Forecasts Sharp Decline in World Economy

**By Merle David Kellerhals Jr.
Staff Writer**

Washington — Global economic activity will plummet by an average 4.3 percent this year, sending unemployment soaring past 10 percent while international trade falls by more than 13 percent, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) said March 31.

The Paris-based, 30-nation OECD said in its interim economic outlook that the global economy is in “the deepest and most widespread recession for more than 50 years. The global recession will worsen this year before a policy-induced recovery gradually builds momentum through 2010.”

OECD Secretary-General Angel Gurría told G8 labor and employment ministers meeting in Rome that governments will have to take quick and decisive action to stop the current crisis from becoming “a fully blown social crisis with scarring effects on vulnerable workers and low-income households.”

In the United States, economic activity will fall sharply in the near term, but the country could begin to pull out of the recession in early 2010, the OECD report said. That assessment corresponds with recent comments by U.S. Federal Reserve Chairman Benjamin Bernanke, who has said that if credit lending and loans by commercial banks begin flowing into the domestic economy this year, the recession could end by the first of next year.

“Restoring global growth is an economic and political priority, but also an ethical, moral, social and human

imperative,” Gurría said at the March 30 Rome meeting.

The OECD interim economic outlook comes two days before the leaders of the Group of 20 advanced and emerging market countries meet in London to resolve some of the



*OECD Secretary General Angel Gurría. (AFP/File/
Eric Piermont)*

thorny issues emanating from the current global recession. The world leaders, whose countries represent 85 percent of the global economy, will discuss further stimulus measures to jump-start economies, and regulatory reform of financial markets that would avoid this kind of crisis in the future.

President Obama, who left for London March 31, will present a four-part program at the G20 leaders' conference. The first step is putting in place a significant stimulus package to get growth going again, Michael Froman, deputy national security adviser for international economic affairs, said in a White House conference call March 28.

The president's plan also involves

repairing financial systems to get lending flowing; avoiding protectionism; and minimizing the spread of the crisis to emerging markets and developing countries, Froman said.

Froman said the United States is seeking to expand regulation to systemically important institutions, products and markets, which includes hedge funds; to create codes of conduct for offshore financial centers, also known as tax havens; to agree to reforms of the global financial system; and to push for greater cooperation among international regulators.

The OECD report also said that weak export markets, falling investment and a continuing credit crunch will hamper European activity “hard over the coming six months. The recovery will only begin to build momentum by the middle of 2010.”

The report said the most dangerous risk is that the weakening economy will further undermine the health of financial institutions, which, in turn, would deepen the slump in economic activity.

The full text of the OECD interim report (http://www.oecd.org/docu-ment/59/0,3343,en_2649_34109_42234619_1_1_1_37443,00.html) is available on the group's Web site.

(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>) ♦

Major Economic Powers to Focus on Global Recovery

By Andrzej Zwanecki
Staff Writer

Washington — A boost in international emergency funds and agreement on financial-markets oversight likely will be among the concrete results of the April 2 meeting of the world's major economic powers.

Leaders of developed and developing economies that make up the Group of 20 (G20) are scheduled to meet April 2 in London to consider measures aimed at addressing the recession and financial crisis. Worsening economic conditions have added urgency to the meeting, which is expected to build on the principles agreed to by the leaders at their November 2008 meeting in Washington.

The final document of the London summit is likely to be more action-oriented, observers say, but its language broad enough to make sure that everybody agrees.

Lerrick, like many, expects one of the few concrete results to be a pledge to boost resources of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to help countries particularly affected by the crisis to meet financing needs. The United States, the European Union and Japan already have vowed to increase the fund's lending capacity.

But some analysts expect more. John Kirton, director of the G8 Research Group at the University of Toronto, said a tentative consensus

on several key issues at the March 14 G20 finance ministers' meeting indicates that the summit can lead to significant changes in the way financial companies do business.



U.S. Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner, center, seats with Britain's Chancellor of the Exchequer Alistair Darling, right, and Mexican Central Bank Governor Guillermo Ortiz as they pose for a family photograph during the G20 Finance Ministers Meeting near Horsham, England, Saturday, March 14, 2009.

At that meeting, the G20 members agreed in principle to reform their financial systems, including making all markets, products and large firms subject to regulatory oversight and enforcing this oversight across borders.

However, how to update global financial business rules when regulation remains national is a difficult question, many analysts say.

AMERICAN DRIFT OR EUROPEAN THRIFT?

Many analysts believe that several major economies, particularly those with large trade surpluses such as Japan and Germany, need to promptly come up with more ambitious economic stimulus measures

to increase odds for a global recovery. If they do not, the summit is likely to be seen as a disappointment, they say.

As of mid-March, the United States has committed to stimulus spending close to 6 percent of gross domestic product and China around 5 percent, with France at less than 1 percent, Japan around 2 percent and Germany almost 3.5 percent, according to Eswar Prasad of the Brookings Institution, a policy research organization in Washington.

The G20 members have different views of the source of the current crisis and therefore different

views of what recovery efforts are necessary.

The media have focused on divergent priorities of the United States and continental Europe, primarily Germany and France. While U.S. and United Kingdom leaders have called for much more robust fiscal measures, some European leaders have pressed for action on "re-founding" of the international financial system, as French President Nicolas Sarkozy puts it, on the basis of cross-border regulation.

A U.S. Treasury official, who did not want to be identified, said the media overplay the differences and the two sides achieved a great deal of convergence between their posi-

(Continued on page 19)

U.S., Japanese Scientists Test Treatment for Muscular Dystrophy

By Daniel Gorelick
Staff Writer

Washington — Scientists from the United States and Japan successfully tested a treatment for Duchenne muscular dystrophy in dogs, paving the way for a possible treatment of the disease in humans.

The treatment allows cells to skip over lethal mutations in DNA and produce functional proteins.

Such “exon-skipping” therapy has never before been tested in an animal larger than a mouse. The results were published online March 13 in the journal *Annals of Neurology*.

“This trial makes the much-talked-about promise of exon skipping as a systemic treatment for Duchenne muscular dystrophy in humans a real possibility in the near term,” said Toshifumi Yokota, lead author of the study.

“These findings demonstrate that exon skipping is a very real and promising treatment strategy for Duchenne muscular dystrophy,” said Sharon Hesterlee, senior vice president of the Muscular Dystrophy Association, a nonprofit organization that funds related research.

DYSTROPHIC DOGS

Muscular dystrophies are a collection of more than 30 genetic diseases that cause progressive weakness of the skeletal muscles that control movement. The diseases vary in severity. Some, such as Becker muscular dystrophy, have mild symptoms, caused by mutations that produce a shortened form of the dystrophin protein. Duchenne muscular dystrophy, the

most common form, affecting approximately one in 3,500 males worldwide, is caused by mutations in the dystrophin gene that prevent the production of dystrophin protein. Symptoms begin between 3 years and 5 years of age and progress rapidly. Teenagers often can-

To produce a protein, disparate portions of DNA are stitched together, or spliced, to create a contiguous template for protein production. Exons are the portions of DNA that are spliced together.

In Duchenne muscular dystrophy,



A Muscular Dystrophy Association camper pets a miniature horse before competing in a horseback race.

not walk and require a respirator to breathe. Duchenne is fatal and, like all muscular dystrophies, there currently is no treatment.

The new study used beagles with a mutation in the canine dystrophin gene.

“Many efforts have focused on treating dogs with muscular dystrophy, as it is widely expected that what works in the dogs will work in humans,” said Eric Hoffman, professor of pediatrics at Children’s National Medical Center and a senior author of the study.

EXON SKIPPING

mutations tell the cellular machinery to prematurely stop making the protein. With the exon-skipping strategy, researchers use synthetic DNA to trick cells into skipping over the exon that contains the mutation. The cell will make a shorter version of the dystrophin protein, but, as in Becker muscular dystrophy, researchers hope the short version is enough to restore some function to muscle.

One complication is that multiple exons must be skipped in order to avoid the mutations and produce enough of the protein. Each exon requires a separate synthetic DNA sequence. The current study is the

(Continued on page 19)

U.S., Japanese Scientists Test Treatment for Muscular Dystrophy . . .

(Continued from page 18)

first to show that a cocktail of different DNA sequences can work together to treat muscular dystrophy.

"Systemic treatment of the majority of Duchenne dystrophy will require multiple sequences to be delivered in the blood, and this study also is the first proof-of-principle of multiple exon skipping in any organism," said Dr. Shin'ichi Takeda, a researcher at the National Center of Neurology and Psychiatry in Tokyo and a senior author of the study.

Hoffman, Takeda and their colleagues were able to restore dystrophin to 26 percent of normal levels, on average. The treatment dramatically improved dogs' ability to walk and run.

Despite the recovery of walking and running ability, the treatment's effectiveness varied in muscles throughout the body. Dystrophin protein levels were not restored to similar levels in every muscle. Different levels were apparent in the same muscle on different sides of the body. In the heart, dystrophin was concentrated in small patches of muscle and present in "far lower levels" than in skeletal muscle, scientists found.

Future studies will test how much muscle function can be restored long term, will treat a greater number of animals and will experiment with ways to improve the treatment's access to the heart, the authors wrote in the paper.

"In order to realize that promise in

human trials, it also will be important to re-evaluate current measures of toxicity, efficacy, and marketing that ensure both safety for the patient, as well as rapid development and distribution of life-saving drugs," Takeda said.

Hoffman said that these results are a proof-of-concept that therapy targeting specific pieces of DNA is effective in a large animal "for Duchenne muscular dystrophy or any disease."

"Of course, this success has also introduced even more avenues for investigation, but these findings finally overcome a significant hurdle to our progress," Yokota said. "We've solved the riddle of an effective systemwide delivery to muscle tissue, and seen promising results." ♦

Major Economic Powers to Focus on Global Recovery . . .

(Continued from page 17)

tions at the finance ministers' meeting.

In the communiqué that came out of that meeting, the G20 members agreed to boost spending for as long as necessary, preferably in a concerted fashion, and to put the IMF in charge of identifying those not doing their part.

"We don't want a situation in which some countries are making extraordinary efforts and some others aren't in the hope that those who are taking those important steps will lift everybody," President Obama said at a March 24 news conference.

Some differences between trans-Atlantic partners remain.

The Europeans resist the American pressure for more government spending, Lerrick said, because they are suspicious of the cure — spending — that is so similar to the cause of the problem. They also argue that their social safety-net programs automatically pump more government spending than do those in the United States and that they cannot risk destabilizing their economies by increasing public debt.

But many U.S. analysts reject these arguments, particularly in regard to Germany, one of the world's top economies and exporters.

"Germany is in denial," said Desmond Lachman of the American Enterprise Institute, if it believes it has done enough. According to Kirton, the trans-Atlantic debate

about anti-recessionary policies misses an important point. Stimulus measures make sense as long as they are accompanied by initiatives to unfreeze credit markets. "It doesn't make much sense to pour money into one end of the hose if you have constrictions somewhere down the hose," he said.

Kirton said expansive monetary policies in the United States and the United Kingdom aimed at stimulating lending and economic activity have not produced desired results so far because of constraints on credit in the banking industry.

In recent weeks, the Obama administration has announced measures to clean up banks' balance sheets as a way to get them to restore lending. ♦

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Telling America's story

Citizens Police Academies Offer Realistic View . . .

(Continued from page 12)

we have to show [citizens] what we can do as a police department. But I really think, more importantly, we show them what we can't do," Powers said. Often citizens are not aware of the limits placed on police by the law.

POLICE DEPARTMENTS BENEFIT

Powers acknowledged that when the South Bend Police Department set up its first citizens police academy 10 years ago, it was difficult to persuade officers to become instructors or presenters.

"Officers said, 'Why do people want to do this? All they want to know about is police gossip and hear war stories, and we really don't want to do that,'" Powers recalled.

But after about the second or third year of conducting the academies,

officers learned citizens really are interested in the challenges police face and the training they undergo. Today, Powers has a waiting list of 41 officers who would like to be instructors for citizens police academies.

"Police departments have to make a commitment that they want to open their lives and doors to their community," Powers said. Once that is done, "it will open up communication channels, but more importantly it educates the community and the community educates the police." "You've got to build trust," he said.

More information is available on the Web site of the National Citizens Police Academy Association (<http://www.nationalcpaa.org/>).

(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>) ♦

Obama Heads to Europe with Extensive Schedule . . .

(Continued from page 13)

Obama travels to Strasbourg and Kehl on April 3 to meet with French President Nicolas Sarkozy and German Chancellor Angela Merkel. That will be followed by the traditional NATO leaders' working dinner. Obama will also deliver a major address on the United States' trans-Atlantic alliance and take questions from European students.

On April 4, there will be a full day of North Atlantic Council meetings and also a celebration of the 60th anniversary of the NATO alliance.

"We're working very hard to bring a new level of dialogue and a new level of discussion and consultation with all of our allies and friends around the world," National Security Adviser James Jones said

at a March 27 briefing. The United States is "interested in, obviously, leading, but [also] in partnering with countries around the world to confront common challenges. Afghanistan and Pakistan, and the region, certainly is one such challenge."

Among other topics for NATO are a new strategic concept for the alliance that reflects 21st century challenges, membership, the NATO Russia Council and missile defense, McDonough said.

While in Prague for the April 5 European Union summit, Obama will deliver a speech on nuclear nonproliferation and meet with Czech Republic President Vaclav Klaus, recently resigned Prime Minister Mirek Topolánek, and former Czech President Vaclav Havel. Topolánek continues to govern until a

new Czech government can be appointed. He is also currently the president of the European Union.

Obama is also expected to meet with Spanish President José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero.

Finally, Obama concludes his first trip to Europe with separate meetings April 6 in Ankara and Istanbul, Turkey. He will meet with Turkish President Abdullah Gül and Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan, McDonough said.

McDonough said Obama wanted to make clear on his first trip that Turkey is a vital ally, a vital member of NATO, and a vital bilateral partner with the United States on a range of issues, such as its leadership role in providing Israeli and Syrian talks. ♦